

**BROTHERHOOD OF ST LAURENCE
PROJECT REPORT**

The Job Centre

A Proposal for Helping the Unemployed

J O B C E N T R E

A proposal for a twelve month pilot project to examine the feasibility of alternative ways of helping the unemployed.

" . . . it is accepted that Government has an important role to play in ensuring that . . . changes and adjustments on the part of the work-force are facilitated in order to avoid as far as possible, the personal economic hardship and wastefulness of unemployment. Hence the need in Australia for a range of manpower programs tailored for the adjustment needs of the sizeable proportion of displaced employees who have difficulty finding suitable new employment quickly. I mention Australia specifically because we are virtually last among advanced Western economies in responding to the now widely recognised need for manpower adjustment measures."

Address by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations,
the Hon. A. A. Street, MP, to the 47th ANZAAS Congress, Hobart,
14th May, 1976. p. 13.

Brotherhood of St Laurence,
September, 1976.

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INTRODUCTION:

In Canada, the U.S.A. and the U.K. there has been increasing recognition of the need to reorganise the traditional pattern of service delivery of government employment services. In the U.S.A. the Government is by-passing its own employment service and is funding community groups to devise and conduct training and work experience programs. In the U.K. the job placement function of the employment service has been separated from unemployment benefit administration. In Canada pilot programs are being undertaken involving communities in dealing with employment and related programs. In Australia there has been virtually no departure from the establishment of traditional employment service offices and recent cut-backs in Government expenditure preclude the possibility of community groups being funded.

In Australia, the Commonwealth Employment Service (C.E.S.) is the government employment agency and is a section of the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations. The relationship between the C.E.S. and the Department is essentially that described by the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration in differentiating between senior and junior staff throughout the public service:

More senior people do not deal directly with the public, but simply 'make decisions': accordingly, the lowest and least experienced grades deal with the public and the higher grades issue the verdict, usually after the 'client' has left the office.

There are two basic ways in which the unemployed find jobs - referral by the C.E.S. and self-referral. C.E.S. referral is limited, however, by the number of employers who do not notify the C.E.S. of vacancies and instead, fill their vacancies by word of mouth or by advertising. This situation will continue for as long as employers are not obligated to inform the C.E.S. of all their vacancies. It is also limited by the work load of the C.E.S. AND THE MORE UNEMPLOYED THERE ARE the less able is the C.E.S. to adequately fulfil its placement function. In addition, only half of those vacancies registered with the C.E.S. are filled by the C.E.S. The unemployed are expected however, in addition to accepting C.E.S. referrals, to look for their own jobs provide information when required on what efforts they have taken to obtain work and this is regarded as an indication of their willingness to work.

For many of the unemployed self-help is an unrealistic expectation. Opportunities for self-help exist, of course, but many people lack confidence in their ability to cope. Self-help is a learnt experience. For many others, unemployment is a new experience and it is not so much not being able to help themselves as to know how to, and in the most effective way possible. The psychological shock of not being able to find work has the potential to destroy the initiative and self-esteem of people who have never experienced unemployment. In order to help themselves, unemployed people need information about jobs and job resources to help them to attain and retain those jobs. There is little doubt that many unemployed persons would benefit from a Centre that provided easy access to information about jobs, thereby eliminating much of the cost and time involved in their search for work. Unemployed people would be helped too, by assistance in the ways to approach an interview situation, looking for jobs and by clarification of their statutory rights and obligations. Many of the unemployed, particularly the long-term unemployed, often have no idea of employers' expectations of them at interviews and consequently their efforts to obtain jobs are self-defeating. In an employer's market, such as the current one, mere absence of social skills consigns many otherwise competent and reliable persons to continual rebuffs and dependence on unemployment benefit. For the long-term unemployed a lack of motivation is critical and efforts are needed to restore that motivation through positive and constructive discussion and assistance.

That amorphous abstract public opinion wavers and fluctuates in its response to unemployment and the unemployed. There are enough jobs or there are not enough jobs. The unemployed are bludgers or the unemployed want to work.

There are not enough jobs, but jobs there are and matching the unemployed with unfilled vacancies is not a self-evident process. The attitudes and expectations of employers and the unemployed can both be at variance with the facts. Both employers and the unemployed need orientation to each other's expectations, attitudes and experiences.

Primarily, the Job Centre will exist as a resource centre for the unemployed. Our assumption is that most of the unemployed want to work, but that not all of the unemployed are able to find and retain jobs. This is for a variety of factors including a shortage of jobs, inadequate information, a lack of resources, poor motivation, and for the unemployed lack of

qualifications, skills and experience. Most of the unemployed do not have the necessary experience, qualification and skills for most of the unfilled vacancies. The Job Centre would provide information and resources and supportive mechanisms for facilitating the motivation of the unemployed.

No amount of information, resources and motivation will, however, find jobs for the majority of the unemployed. So, the Job Centre has to proceed on a basis of realism, and not promise jobs when jobs cannot be promised. What the Job Centre could do however, is:

- (a) help the unemployed find and retain those jobs that do exist and help tease out jobs from employers and the community.
- (b) help the unemployed cope with their unemployment not as a symptom of personal failure but as a consequence of economic circumstances beyond their personal control.
- (c) help the dignity of the unemployed and affirm their right to work and, in the meantime, their right to adequate support from government and community.
- (d) help the unemployed to help themselves through a resource centre for and by the unemployed.

Already several self-help programs for and by the unemployed have been established. The impact of Get-A-Job (Blacktown, N.S.W.), Jobless Action (Canberra, A.C.T.), P.U.S.H. (Heidelberg, Vic.), the Preston Employment Action Group (Preston, Vic.), Support Work Program (in the Action and Resource Centre for Low Income Families in Fitzroy, Vic.) and the other existing or proposed programs is their visibility - the unemployed are seen to be helping themselves.

The future of existing and proposed programs is, however, problematic because in order to survive, be effective, consolidate and develop they need funds and resources. Programs at Rockhampton (Queensland), Mt. Druitt (N.S.W.) and Albury-Wodonga and Westernport (Vic.) have lapsed through a lack of funds and resources.

We would propose to establish a Job Centre with adequate funding and resources. Resources predetermine the chances of a project in achieving its objectives and of being able to be properly tested and evaluated. Other centres have been handicapped by inadequate resources. Our proposal, we believe, provides enough resources, staff and time for a proper testing and evaluation.

We would envisage the Job Centre as liaising and co-operating with existing and proposed self-help programs for and by the unemployed, in particular with those centres established in the Melbourne metropolitan area. Along those lines, discussions have been held with people involved in the Preston Employment Action Group, a group based in the Malvern-Oakleigh area, P.U.S.H. in West Heidelberg, S.L.E.O.S. in Ringwood and the Westernport Regional Council for Social Development.

In its report, the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration has argued that there are 'occasions when the purpose of government can be better achieved through the work of agencies which are non-governmental.' Continuing its argument, the Commission suggested, 'The key question about the use of voluntary agencies is to determine in what circumstances they will perform a function better than any of the government agencies.' The Commission was 'unable to make the inquiries necessary to establish definitive criteria' to determine such circumstances, but argues that 'reliance on voluntary agencies is most likely to prove satisfactory when:

- (a) an agency that has reasonably wide coverage already exists, (for example, a national body such as the Australian Council of Social Service or an agency in close touch with clients, such as the Brotherhood of St Laurence) and is doing a part or whole of the job the government wishes done - especially where there is evidence that it may bring to bear a dedication and involvement not readily achieved by officials;
- (b) aspects of the job to be done make it difficult for officials to perform: for example, when knowledge of the private lives of individuals is required or where the personal qualities required of those performing it can be found only among those with a special vocation;

- (c) knowledge and skills arising from membership of particular sections of the community are called for, for example, in bodies like the Regional Councils for Social Development and the Marriage Guidance Councils;
- (d) it is cheaper to subsidise a community organisation rather than establish a government agency.'

Our proposal for a Job Centre is to evaluate by a demonstration project, how the operations of the C.E.S. could be changed and whether or not community groups and the unemployed should be funded to provide a self-help service for the unemployed.

1 : PEOPLE GETTING AND KEEPING JOBS:

1.1 The unemployed are the continuing subject of controversy in the community concerning whether or not they wish to work and there is a tendency to distinguish between the deserving and the undeserving unemployed. This distinction is a simplistic approach to unemployment and the unemployed. Individual behaviour is the consequence of underlying causative factors and these need to be identified and assessed.

1.2 Critical to determining community and employer attitudes to the unemployed is the job seeking behaviour of the unemployed. In order to understand this job seeking behaviour of the unemployed we need to understand their circumstances and this would help us to explain why they behave the way they behave.

1.3 A recent Brotherhood of St Laurence study* concerned with the circumstances of the unemployed concluded that factors of cost, language and lack of practice in the interview situation frequently hampered people in finding their way back into the work force.

1.4 For families on unemployment benefit, once the rent was paid and the family fed there was little (if any) cash left over for other things. Over the period of a week the cost of buying daily newspapers, making telephone inquiries for jobs and travelling to interviews becomes a major item of expenditure. Unemployed persons are commonly spending between one and two dollars daily looking for work and such an outlay may represent as much as a quarter of their total unemployment benefit.

1.5 Almost one in every three persons in the sample of 160 persons did not think that the C.E.S. was trying to help them find jobs.

1.6 The extent to which the unemployed are reliant on their own resources to secure employment is evidenced by the fact that 55% of the sample had made more self-referrals

for jobs than the C.E.S. had been able to make on their behalf. In fact, most people referred themselves and in just over half the cases, the C.E.S. had not made any referrals at all.

1.7 A large number (approximately one in six) of the people interviewed in the study had been referred to another agency for assistance of one kind or another. Such assistance took the form of interpreting, in order to answer a variety of queries related to their unemployment situation; emergency relief when unemployment benefit cheques had not arrived on time; other material help (e.g., children's clothing); and help in determining their rights and eligibility (for special readjustment allowance, for example).

1.8 In particular, migrants (about half the sample) who were not fluent in English were often highly confused by their dealings with the C.E.S. and seemed to have had hardly any chance of obtaining work unless they were given the help of an interpreter in seeking out and making applications for jobs on their behalf.

1.9 Contrary to general public belief, the young people in the study, almost without exception, expressed frustration and boredom about being unemployed. Many had been unemployed for extremely long periods and were finding considerable difficulty getting into the work force after leaving school. The habits they had acquired of sleeping late, moping about, and generally being aimless, were disconcerting to them and militated against eventual work adjustment. An accessible Centre with a focus on finding employment and confronting problems associated with long term unemployment would be welcomed by them. The usefulness of such centres has already been demonstrated in Albury-Wodonga, Mt. Druitt (N.S.W.), West Heidelberg (Vic.), Rockhampton (Queensland) and other places. All these centres have however, suffered from limited resources which in turn, has not made possible a comprehensive evaluation of their work.

1.10 Our own work with the unemployed, the experience of other welfare agencies and many public servants in State Social Welfare Departments, the Department of Social

Security and the C.E.S. is that the community is not sufficiently aware of the difficulties experienced by the unemployed in finding and holding jobs.

There is a shortage of jobs, but for many in the community this is not concrete and real. What, then, are some of the concrete and real difficulties experienced by the unemployed?

1.11 Transportation problems. If you do not have your own transport then your job seeking and job holding is dependent on public transport. If public transport is bad as in Frankston and Canberra this further restricts job seeking and job holding. If there is no direct public transport route between the home of the unemployed person and the location of the job then the circuitous public transport route required is time consuming and psychologically wearing. One school leaver was offered a \$56 a week job that would have necessitated four hours travelling a day. Not surprisingly, the offer was refused.

1.12 Employers attitudes towards the unemployed. The expectations of employers are often unreal. This particularly applies to the lower age group. Expecting 16 year olds to have had two years experience and work for the lowest junior wages is unreasonable. If a person has been unemployed for a long time employers are inclined to regard them as unemployable. Employers do not always show common courtesy in letting applicants know they have not been successful. School leavers and people retrained under NEAT are sometimes refused jobs because they do not have enough experience.

1.13 In the past, and still, most people including most school leavers, have never experienced long periods of unemployment. They have drifted into and between jobs. Unemployment has been short-term and a relatively reasonable job could always be found. The poor coped with the worst jobs by drifting in and out of them. With an upward shift in the unemployment rate and a shortage of jobs, finding and keeping jobs is more important than it ever was. Interview skills, preparation of job applications, job leads and expanding vocational choice are now more important than they were when it was a sellers market. Initial letters sent to employers can

predispose employers for or against your application. The unemployed sometimes limit themselves to looking for one job without considering different types of jobs. There are others who rely on the employment service for jobs. This is unreal when the C.E.S. only registers approximately half the available vacancies and of these only half are filled through the C.E.S.

1.14 The unemployed person's perception of reality. From the point of view of many of the unemployed the C.E.S. is not seen as being responsive to their needs. This is the experience of many users of community-based self-help programs established by and for the unemployed, the experience of voluntary welfare agencies and a research finding of the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration. The reasonableness of this feeling is beside the point, the fact is that many of the unemployed have a negative experience and reaction to the C.E.S. Criticisms of the negativism of Employment Office interviews refers not only to the attitudes of particular C.E.S. staff, but to the fact that when there is a shortage of jobs. As the C.E.S. is meant to put people into jobs, then there is very little that the C.E.S. can in fact do to help put people into jobs. The C.E.S. as a public service organisation has conflicting objectives and requirements. It has a responsibility to help the unemployed and ensure that the unemployed do not abuse unemployment benefit. Attempting to achieve these different and conflicting objectives creates tension and ambivalence.

1.15 Discouragement by the unemployed should not be underestimated. It is very easy and a quite quick process to become discouraged and depressed when unable to find work. The person who has applied for over 30 jobs and remains unemployed begins to believe in his/her own inferiority and incompetence. This belief is reinforced by the negative experience with the C.E.S. and community scapegoating of the unemployed as 'bludgers'. The examples of those who have looked and failed are known to those about to look and who have just started looking, and the question becomes is there any point in looking at all when whether you make three applications or 30 applications you will still be unemployed. The discouraged need encouragement to fight for their right to work. But, they also need realism and not illusions - there are not enough jobs and no one can promise or guarantee employment. The provision of enough jobs depends

4.9 The staff of the Centre would also meet weekly for evaluation sessions. These evaluations would enable an ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of the Centre, establishing difficulties and needs, and identifying inappropriate procedures.

4.10 Critical to the success of the Centre is to maximise the effectiveness of the Centre, and therefore to appoint staff with appropriate skills. In appointing the staff consideration must be given to the background characteristics of the unemployed who could/would use the Centre - approximately two-thirds of the unemployed are women and young persons, approximately half of the unemployed are migrants and approximately two-thirds of the unemployed are in the unskilled, semi-skilled and clerical and administrative occupational groups.

5 : BUDGET:

Staff Salaries:

Job Centre Staff:	Co-ordinator (1 x 52 x \$173)	9,000	
	Welfare Workers (3 x 52 x \$140)	21,840	
		<hr/>	\$30,840

Office Equipment:

Hiring of office equipment	500	
Tapes (recording purposes)	500	
Stationery, paper, printing and office equipment, telephone and postage	2,000	
Travel expenses	750	
Newspapers and library	200	
Coffee, tea facilities	200	
Sundry expenses (Worker's Compensation electricity, cleaning)	2,000	
	<hr/>	\$ 5,150

Other:

Advertising	1,000	
Rent	3,000	
	<hr/>	\$ 4,000

TOTAL COST:

\$39,990

6 : EVALUATION:

6.1 A continuing evaluation is proposed for the duration of the Centre. An initial evaluation would be prepared at the end of the fourth month.

6.2 An evaluation of the Centre is a crucial aspect of the project. Activities would be fully documented so as to enable an independent assessment of the Centre and whether or not the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations should change its operation or commit itself to funding similar or modified projects on a long-term basis. Much information of interest to governments, businesses, educational institutions, research organisations and others would therefore be available. The pattern of enquiries by the unemployed and employers, and changes in this pattern would be of interest to governments and other organisations, and this desirable feedback function should be undertaken, provided the privacy of individual users is ensured.

6.3 The Research Officer would design an evaluation of the project, monitor the progress of the project, direct and supervise in association with the Social Policy Officer the collection of data and analyse the findings at required intervals. This data would include :

- (a) The collection of documents and statistics.
- (b) Recording discussion groups and individual experiences.
- (c) Writing day by day records of the Centre's activities.

6.4 Hopefully, limited comparative evaluations would be made of other job centres established in the Melbourne metropolitan area. This would broaden the validity and usefulness of the data and would facilitate generalised application of the evaluation.

7 : DURATION:

7.1 During the last six months there have been several apparently successful short-term projects of community initiated and community based employment exchanges. These exchanges have lapsed or closed through lack of resources, e.g. SLUMP in Frankston and Dandenong, SLUMP in Rockhampton and Mt. Druitt. Others have recently commenced operating e.g. PUSH in Heidelberg, and Blacktown in N.S.W.

7.2 The Centre could succeed to the extent that it led to changes in the operations of the C.E.S. Possibly the C.E.S. could be persuaded to provide funds for community groups to act as job placement agencies as in the U.S.A. and Canada. Or there could be a reorganisation of the C.E.S. where the unemployment benefit processing and placement functions are separated as in the United Kingdom. Another option would be the seconding of C.E.S. staff to community agencies.

7.3 Crucial to our proposal is the projected duration of one year. A year is needed to carry the Centre through an establishment period to a consolidation period.

8 : LOCATION:

8.1 Visibility is critical to accessibility. The Job Centre would be most visible if established as a shop front in a central shopping area.

8.2 Felt accessibility would be further enhanced if the Job Centre was geographically independent of the Brotherhood and the Action Resource Centre (A.R.C.). A Job

Centre established with the Brotherhood or A.R.C. would invariably stigmatise the Centre as a welfare centre and this would discourage many from using the Centre.

8.3 A critical choice would be whether or not the Centre was established centrally within the inner suburbs or established in a regional area such as Preston-West Heidelberg.

8.4 Establishing the Centre centrally while promoting accessibility through a central location and good public transport could have the following problems:

- (a) if too accessible and useful, the Centre could be swamped by the unemployed and be unable to function effectively,
- (b) its closeness to the Brotherhood could ensure its identification as a welfare centre and inhibit possible and eventual community participation and control of the Centre.

A further benefit of a central location would be to facilitate the possible co-ordinating role of the Centre with other job centres.

8.5 Establishing the Centre in a regional area would have the disadvantages of:

- (a) distance of the Centre from the significant back-up and available resources of the sponsoring organisation.
- (b) forcing the Centre to establish and find its own resources.
- (c) impeding the envisaged co-ordinating role of the Centre.

The advantages would be to clearly separate the Centre from its sponsoring body and force it to establish liaison with the local community and make possible eventual Brotherhood withdrawal from the Centre and enable the local community to take over the responsibility for the Centre. This alternative would depend

on the existence from the inception of the Centre of extensive community support for the Centre, a commitment and ability to help the operations of the Centre, and a willingness to assume eventual control.

9 : OPERATING HOURS:

9.1 It is envisaged that the Centre would operate between 7.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. during the week, and at other times as indicated.

10 : MANAGEMENT:

10.1 A Management Committee would establish policy for the Centre and supervise the research evaluation. Membership of the Management Committee would be as follows:

- (a) Two A.R.C. staff,
- (b) Two Brotherhood of St Laurence staff,
- (c) One staff person from the Department of Social Security,
- (d) Two staff from the C.E.S.,
- (e) Two appointees from other voluntary welfare agencies,
- (f) Three representatives of users of the Centre.

The part-time and full-time staff of the Centre would attend the meetings of the Management Committee.

10.2 The Management Committee would meet monthly and receive reports from the Co-ordinator, Social Policy Officer and the Research Officer.

10.3 An objective would be to provide and develop opportunities for the participation of unemployed people in the decision making processes of the Management Committee and the Centre. While accountable to the Management Committee, the staff of the Centre would also be accountable to the unemployed users i.e. responsive to the needs/demands of the unemployed as indicated by them.

10.4 Meetings of the Management Committee would be at the Centre and would be open meetings.

11 : APPENDICES:

- 11.1 Self-help programs for and by the unemployed.
- 11.2 Draft leaflet for users.
- 11.3 Draft employee registration form.
- 11.4 Draft employer registration form.
- 11.5 Extract from U&SB Manual, Unemployment Benefit - Section 14.
- 11.6 Safeguard Your Benefit - Prepared by Unemployed People's Movement of N.S.W.
- 11.7 Official leaflet : HELP C.E.S. HELP YOU.
- 11.8 Draft - Co-operation Between Self-helps.
- 11.9 Job Description : Co-ordinator - Job Centre.
- 11.10 Bibliography.

11.1 SELF-HELP PROGRAMS FOR AND BY THE UNEMPLOYED:
KNOWN OPERATIVE AND PROPOSED (AUSTRALIA),
SEPTEMBER, 1976.

Unemployed People's Movement of N.S.W.

Jobless Action Group - Canberra.

Service to Youth Council - S.A.

Chigwell United Unemployed Group - Tasmania.

Albury-Wodonga Youth Employment Agency.

Get-A-Job, Blacktown, N.S.W.

PUSH - Heidelberg, Victoria.

SLEOS - Ringwood, Victoria.

Preston Employment Action Group, Victoria.

Western RCSD, Victoria.

Frankston Achievement Motivation Group, Victoria.

Geelong YCW Unemployment Group, Victoria.

Youth Employment Group - Ballarat, Victoria.

Youth Organisation for the Unemployed - Melbourne, Victoria.

The Work Centre - Malvern, Victoria.

Employment Exchange - Malvern-Oakleigh, Victoria.

South West Regional Council for Social Development, N.S.W.

The Job Shop - Shepparton, Victoria.

Job Hunters Clubs - Adelaide.

11.2 DRAFT LEAFLET FOR USERS:

WHAT IS THE JOB CENTRE?

We can't promise you jobs.

What we can do is to help you find and obtain those jobs that do exist.

How?

- By providing for free newspapers so that you can look up a job.
- By providing a telephone free of charge so you can contact employers.
- By advising you how the C.E.S. can help you.
- By providing information on the job situation.
- By setting up discussions on getting and keeping jobs.
- By supporting you if you are denied your rights.

There are some jobs:

- (a) Seasonal jobs that are available at different times of the year. We can tell you about these jobs - when available and where.
- (b) Skilled and professional jobs that are unfilled because there is a shortage of people with the necessary skills and qualifications. We can tell you about the training possibilities.
- (c) Jobs that employers could fill but are reluctant to fill because of their uneasiness about the economic situation. Employers can be persuaded to take on staff.
- (d) Part-time and casual jobs.
- (e) Jobs that could be created if you have an idea and someone is willing to pay for that idea e.g. mowing lawns.
- (f) Dirty jobs that are noxious, dangerous and monotonous. No-one at the Job Centre will pressure you to take these jobs.

You have a right to work - if you want to work.

If you don't want to work -that's your business and not ours.

There will still be a shortage of jobs, however, and we don't know for how long that situation will persist.

The Government should:

GUARANTEE JOBS	meaningful and satisfying
or	
GUARANTEE TRAINING	geared to your needs
or	
GUARANTEE INCOME	20% above the poverty line.

What can we do?

You can help us to help you prove to the government and the community that you are not a 'dole bludger' and that the unemployed are not responsible for their own unemployment.

You can help us in our fight for your right to work - not any job but good jobs.

You can help us in our fight to persuade government it has a responsibility to create jobs when private enterprise cannot.

You can help us in our fight to tell the government and the community what your needs are.

The Job Centre is a resource centre for you to use.

The staff will help you if you request their help.

At the Job Centre you can:

- * meet others who are unemployed
- * sit and talk
- * use the phone.

- * read the newspapers
- * plan a system of resource sharing
- * plan action strategies
- * plan you own work opportunities

The success of the Job Centre will depend as much on what you put in (information and ideas) as on what you take out (re-source use).

11.3 DRAFT EMPLOYEE REGISTRATION FORM:

EMPLOYEE REGISTRATION FORM

Date: No:
Name: Age:
Address:
Telephone No.:
Date left school: Standard reached:

Types of work preferred X preference:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Previous jobs, if any X duration:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Have you registered with the C.E.S.?

What kind of position do you want -
full-time, part-time, casual.

When did you register with the C.E.S.?

How many job referrals have you had from
the C.E.S. since you registered?

Do you own a motor car?

What distance would you be prepared to travel for a job?

Do you have any special qualifications?

11.4 DRAFT EMPLOYER REGISTRATION FORM:

EMPLOYER REGISTRATION FORM

Date:

No:

Employer:

Address:

Contact Person:

Telephone No.:

Job Description:

Location:

Accessibility to public transport:

Minimum qualifications:

Employer expectations (e.g. age, experience):

No. of employees required:

Starting date:

Permanent:

Temporary:

11.5 JOB HINTS:

The material for this section was prepared by the Youth Employment Agency, Albury-Wodonga and a group of public servants in N.S.W.

Start by choosing the jobs which most interest you, then seek out some one to employ you by a 'door knocking' approach, i.e. call at any place where you would like a job, and ask if they will employ you.

Collect as many references from as many responsible people you can find.

Spend some time clearly writing out everything you've

ever done, any particular skills like sports, life-saving, first aid etc.

Telephone any organisation that interests you, and ask to speak to the 'Personnel Officer'.

Keep a pencil and paper ready and take down details. Always ask the Interviewer's name.

Remember your voice is the first indication of the person you are.

The first contact you have with a prospective employer is the most important.

'Buddy System' is excellent. This means always go job hunting with a friend. It will make you feel better to know there's a friend waiting outside for you.

Don't be discouraged! A job hunt, if it is to be successful, must be a full-time job in itself.

Don't rely on C.E.S. to help in your job search, but do ask them for advice. They should be able to tell you what jobs are already 'tied up' by commercial employment agencies.

INTERVIEW HINTS

Before the Interview:

Arrange an appointment time over phone (not always relevant).

Find out as much as you can about the position and the company before the interview.

Take birth certificate, references, school reports, qualification certificates, a copy of a report you may have worked on in a previous position etc. (References should be character and/or employment).

Be punctual.

Dress appropriately, even conservatively (collar and tie/dress - not slacks - except for labouring positions).

At the Interview:

Smile! Shake hands firmly.

Preferably wait to be invited to be seated (don't slouch), and remain attentive throughout the interview.

Be prepared confidently to discuss your weaknesses e.g. lack of qualifications etc.

Question to Anticipate:

Reasons for applying for this position. (Say you are interested in this position, don't say you are just trying to get any old job because you are out of work).

Reasons for leaving last employment or for discontinuing your education. (Be honest because the interviewer may check with last employer or school).

When can you start. (Give a definite date, the earlier the better).

What sports do you play? What clubs do you belong to?

Questions you should ask (if not explained by Interviewer):

What does the organisation do, how long have they been operating etc. (Show you are interested).

Ask how your position fits into the structure of the company.

Who you would be responsible to.

What are your prospects of promotion.

Check work conditions:

Hours.

Pay.

Annual leave entitlements.

Superannuation arrangements (if relevant).

The Award you are covered by.

Ask your employer exactly what is expected of you.

Ask for a job description in writing. If not available write out in detail what is told to you.

HINTS FOR WRITTEN APPLICATIONS

The best written applications for a job are in three parts (on separate sheets of paper):

Sheet 1 is a clear handwritten letter.

Sheet 2 is a typed (if possible) list of personal details.

Sheet 3 is the copies of references you have obtained.

Sheet 1 - The Letter

Do not assume that you can rely on the personal interview to get you the job. Your letter must interest the employer enough to get you on the short-list for an interview.

The letter should be concise, but not skimpy.

Your letter should contain the following:

Name, address and phone number,
Introduction e.g. Dear Sir,

I wish to apply for the
position of
Reasons why you are confident about performing the job well.

Note that personal detail sheet is attached.
Signature.

Sheet 2 - The Personal Detail Sheet

This should be typed if possible, and clearly set out alongside the following headings:

Full name, address, phone number, date of birth, place of birth, educational history (School level reached,

other qualifications and/or training) work experience (including vacation and part-time positions).

Sheet 3 - References

If giving a written reference, give a copy - not the original.

References include school record, teacher's comments/reference, personal/character reference and employment references.

Join a Union:

Remember if you are employed, you do have rights.

Unions protect your rights.

Unions are important because of their strength.

Unions improve your conditions. They fight for your rights when you get into trouble such as an employer 'sacking' you without good reason, or for not paying you full holiday pay when you leave a job.

Unions can help you with training courses.

They can help with free legal advice on any matter relating to your employment that you are unhappy about.

You can obtain discounts at some shops.

Unions generally cost about \$30.00 a year i.e. less than \$1.00 per week.

11.6 EXTRACT FROM: U&SB MANUAL - UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT -
SECTION 14.

COMMUNITY AND/OR SELF-HELP EMPLOYMENT BUREAUX

14.053 Community employment bureaux have been set up by the unemployed to assist each other to gain experience in making job applications and to present themselves well to employers.

The people administering the bureau and counselling the clients are at times unemployed, available for work and claimants for unemployment benefit.

The following criteria are set as conditions to be met

if these counsellors and administrators are to be accepted as eligible to receive unemployment benefit:

- . they must remain available for work;
- . they must take reasonable steps to obtain work;
- . they must retain their registration with the Commonwealth Employment Service.

In addition the bureau itself must:

- . be a non-commercial project making no profit and conducted with voluntary labour;
- . charge no fee for job placement;
- . not require unemployment beneficiaries to assist on a permanent basis;
- . ensure that there is a progressive movement of unemployed helpers through the organisation.

Each bureau operating in this manner must be approved by the Senior Assistant Director (Benefits) as meeting the above criteria before the unemployed helpers can be accepted as qualifying for unemployment benefit.

U&SB Issue No 32
August 1976.

11.7 SAFEGUARD YOUR BENEFIT. Prepared by Unemployed
People's Movement of N.S.W. (Prior August 1976).

Answer all questions on the U/B forms. Avoid use of more than one pen or styles of handwriting. If the form is filled out for you by a friend make sure that such is indicated in the margin.

Be careful how you answer Q.4. What was the reason for ceasing

work? The dole maybe delayed if the SS assessor suspects that it was of your own accord.

Give name and address of last employer in full to avoid getting a letter asking for details; this would delay your cheque and give the computer/staff a chance to lose you.

Don't decline positions offered by the C.E.S., attend any interview which they recommend (not really on the cards at present), it is your right to have the fare paid between the C.E.S. office and the interview (return), after one week's registration.

Benefit can be temporarily suspended should an employer complain of your 'manner' or 'dress', or should you refuse the position at the interview. Be careful, you should know by now that you don't have to do anything let alone anything stupid to be suspended.

When you receive your cheque it has an income statement with it, you have seven days from the date at the bottom of the form to lodge this with the C.E.S. office. If it takes five days arriving don't delay, go straight to the C.E.S. office, one day late and you start wondering how to feed the kids.

If there's no income statement form with the cheque go directly to the C.E.S. office and get one.

If you get terminated by the SS, appeal, 70-80% win appeals. Remember that any government looks better with low unemployment figures, the fewer people there are receiving the dole the fewer they claim are unemployed.

If you receive a telegram from the C.E.S. report to them immediately. Failure to do so can lead to you being struck off the dole.

If for reason of sickness or whatever, you can't make it for an interview with the C.E.S. or to one which they have arranged for you, either obtain a medical certificate, or ring C.E.S. and inform them of reasons why, this is probably advisable in either case.

Most interviewers with some exceptions are with you. Don't spoil this by yelling.

Keep you head down, no slinging off in either the C.E.S. office or the S.S. about your rights. You don't have many of these, the system is designed to punish you for being out of work.

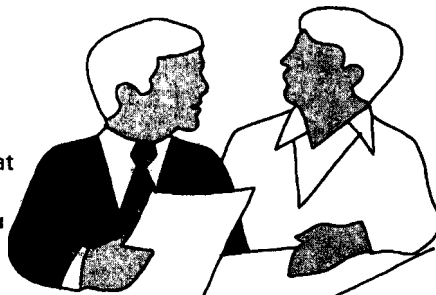
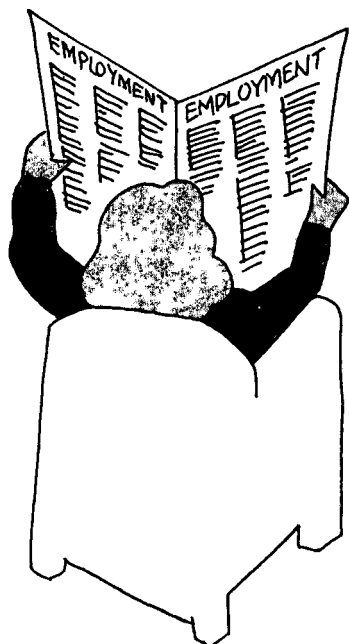
If your benefit has been terminated, you can claim again and again and again.

Reasonable travelling time is reckoned as up to 1½ hours each way (3 hours a day). Fares, not more than 5% of your gross income.

Now you have registered for employment with the Commonwealth Employment Service.

What CES will now do for you.

Your registration means that CES officers will do everything they can for you to find a suitable job. They will take into consideration the type of job you have been doing and are qualified to do in an effort to get you employed again. To achieve this it may be necessary for you to take a "second choice" job.

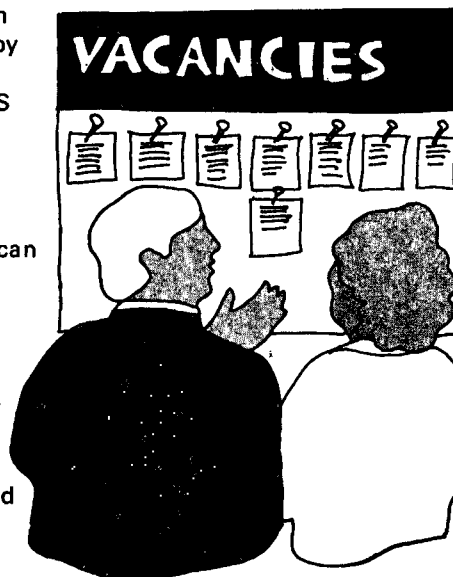


What you should do.

While you are registered with CES you must also continue to help yourself by:

- continuing your own efforts to find yourself a job
- notifying the CES of any change of address
- attending interviews arranged for you with possible employers, by the CES
- calling in to your CES office at any time to discuss possible vacancies
- always presenting yourself as best you can to obtain suitable employment.

If you are eligible for, or receiving Unemployment Benefit, the CES may pay your fares by public transport to attend job interviews and you should enquire about this assistance.

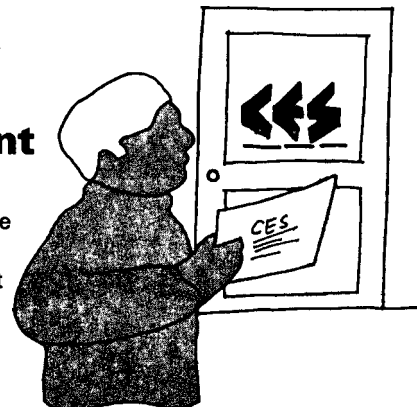


If you do not maintain regular contact with the CES it will be assumed that you no longer require assistance.

Your Unemployment Benefits.

When you register with the CES, you may become eligible for Unemployment Benefit as long as you remain unemployed. This benefit would be paid to you by cheque every 2 weeks by the Department of Social Security. Once in receipt of Unemployment Benefit, to remain eligible, you would be required to lodge fortnightly income statements and to satisfy the work test.

The "work test" is a test which is applied continually by the CES to see whether you are still willing and able to accept suitable employment.



Unemployment Benefit could cease if you:

- decline an offer by the CES of a job interview with an employer
- seek only employment for which you are not qualified; if you are single and are not prepared to move to a location where suitable employment is available
- do not make an attempt, appropriate to the situation to obtain the position after being referred by the CES
- have no acceptable reason for declining particular jobs or for not attending interviews with employers
- do not make an effort on your own behalf.

NEAT training.

Your CES office may discuss with you the possibility of your being re-trained for a new career under the NEAT system of training. See the CES about your chances for re-training.

11.9 AUSTRALIAN JOB VACANCIES

Approximately half of the available job vacancies are registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service. The Australian Bureau of Statistics has conducted three job vacancy surveys throughout Australia in March 1974, March 1975 and March 1976.

Included in the survey results, are vacancies for all categories of employees, including managerial, full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary and seasonal employees; and adults, juniors, trainees apprentices, cadets etc. Private employers not subject to pay-roll tax are excluded from the survey.

The Bureau estimates differ from the number of vacancies registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service at the end of March.

JOB VACANCIES - AUSTRALIA

	March 1974	March 1975	March 1976
C.E.S.	85,348	32,915	22,976
A.B.S.	165,200	55,200	45,700
Registered Un-employed	82,562	267,817	268,900

11.10 CLAIMANTS UNION

In the U.K. Claimants Unions have been established. Claimants are people claiming pensions and benefits - age and invalid pensioners, the sick, the unemployed and single parents.

The U.K. Claimants Unions have the following objectives:

- "1. The right to an adequate income without means-test for all people.

2. A free welfare state for all with its services controlled by the people who use it.
3. No secrets and the right to full information.
4. No distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving'."

In Australia, the Unemployed People's Movement of N.S.W. has adopted the following aims:

- "a) Act in an advisory capacity for members in difficulty with C.E.S., Department of Social Security, welfare bodies, and finance companies etc.
- b) To inform people of the plight of the unemployed and their families to gain understanding, concern and positive action to solve the unemployment problem.
- c) To gain maximum publicity for the Movement.
- d) To liaise with the employed.
- e) To campaign for a moratorium of all outstanding debts of the unemployed.
- f) To develop and strengthen the concept of self-help e.g. co-operative buying, resource sharing etc.
- g) To campaign for legislative reforms designed to assist the unemployed e.g. concession fares."

Employers, politicians and welfare agencies tend to dictate the framework and content of the unemployment debate. The establishment of self-help programs for and by the unemployed is facilitating the participation of the unemployed in this debate. A critical role of the Job Centre would be to explore ways and means of extending opportunities for participation. One possibility to be considered might be that of helping to establish a Claimants Union.

11.11 DRAFT - CO-OPERATION BETWEEN SELF-HELPS

The number of groups who have established or propose to establish self-help programs for and by the unemployed is increasing.

Obviously, it is important for these programs to liaise with each other, exchange information and ideas, and when possible and when relevant, to work together.

Already, there have been three significant initiatives. Firstly, the National Youth Council of Australia (N.Y.C.A.) has published two documents - 'Youth Unemployment in Australia' (July 1976) and 'Youth Unemployment: the Short-term and the Long-term' (September 1976). The latter publication was a submission to the Federal Government and was endorsed by 17 self-help groups. N.Y.C.A. has organised several meetings between self-help groups and has acted as a contact point for these groups.

Secondly, A.C.O.S.S., through the South Australian Council of Social Service is seeking funds to establish contact with self-help programs for and by the unemployed, with the purpose of facilitating a national information and action network.

Finally, the Brotherhood's Social Policy Officer has had discussions with self-help groups in Victoria, N.S.W., Tasmania and the A.C.T. regarding information exchange. Documents obtained from various groups have been photocopied and circulated to other groups. The Social Policy Officer has liaised with the N.Y.C.A.

With the establishment of the Job Centre the Brotherhood could continue to circulate documents between the groups. Other possibilities for the Job Centre would be to work with other programs in preparing and publishing joint leaflets and other publications, in making joint submissions to government and to participate generally in joint activities.

11.12 JOB DESCRIPTION: CO-ORDINATOR - JOB CENTRE

JOB DESCRIPTION

CO-ORDINATOR JOB CENTRE

The Brotherhood of St Laurence wishes to appoint a Co-ordinator for a new experimental program, the Job Centre. The Job Centre will be a practical demonstration project aimed at establishing alternative ways of helping the unemployed.

The Project has been funded by the Brotherhood for a 12 month period.

It is desirable that the Co-ordinator be familiar with the policies procedures and regulations of the Department of Social Security and the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations and have a proven commitment to the protection and development of the rights of the unemployed.

Experience in teamwork, office management, dealing with Government and voluntary welfare agencies, working with the unemployed and the experience of having been unemployed would be an advantage.

The Co-ordinator would:

- a) Supervise a small team of up to 3 other workers.
- b) Report regularly to a Management Committee.
- c) Develop the operations of the Centre with staff participation in decision-making.
- d) Seek to develop mechanisms ensuring accountability to claimants.
- e) Co-operate with other experimental self-help projects run for and by the unemployed.
- f) Organise workshops and discussion groups for the unemployed.
- g) Supervise and maintain an advisory and information service for the unemployed on the job situation, job alternatives, employers needs and expectations, and their rights as unemployed persons.

- h) Supervise a job matching and placement service.
- i) Establish contacts with employers, employer groups, trade unions, ethnic groups, youth groups and welfare agencies.

Salary to be negotiated up to \$9000.

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